

Accounting Matters

I am merely preaching to the choir in my preface when I say that accounting matters. As you can read inside this issue, Hans Hoogervorst, Chairman of IASB, recounted several areas in his public lecture at LSE where indeed accounting mattered, and matters, a great deal (pages 8-9). Many of these areas are the subject of our research at LSE, and not only from a technical perspective, but quintessentially also considering how accounting standards are shaping, and being shaped by, their contexts, including their behavioural impacts as well as their economic rationales and political impetuses.

Indeed, Peter Holgate, a newly-appointed visiting professor at LSE with an acclaimed career in practice, is very apt when he reflects on his first year at LSE saying that, whilst the students at LSE have knowledge about the specific accounting rules, it was the politics and historical contingencies of the rule setting in which they were very interested (page 9). This suggests, as we aspire to, that our research rubs off on our teaching. But it also goes the other way, where teaching and research “converge to create an inspirational environment” as a former MSc student puts it in his reflections on page 13.

The variety and diversity of “matters” in accounting of interest to the LSE accounting community are featured plentifully in this magazine, covering areas such as risk culture (page 7), corporate governance (page 10), technology (page 5), sustainability and greenhouse accounting (page 14), accounting “artifacts” and practices (page 3) – where these topics and interests cover a wide range of sectors and constituencies including the full set of accounting information users (page 6), NGOs (page 4, page 16), the Prison Service of England and Wales (page 13), and the British Airline Pilots Association (page 11), just to name some. Although “impact” has become an explicit university funding criterion in the UK of late, it is something that we at LSE, as our research travels across national borders, sectors and publics, have always regarded as important.

I congratulate Professor Mike Power on his Honorary Doctorate from Uppsala University (page 3) for his work that appositely illustrates the trajectory of impact across a scholar’s body of work over time. I also congratulate Visiting Professor Wayne Landsman on his AAA Notable Contribution Award for his work on international accounting standards and accounting quality (page 9). And I warmly welcome Professors Bjorn Jorgensen and Peter Pope (page 2) whose track records reveal the fitting breadth of accounting research that we embrace at LSE.

Looking ahead, I eagerly anticipate meeting the new cohort of students, as well as colleagues who come to LSE to present their work in our vibrant and diverse accounting research forums and brownbags (pages 23-24).

I hope you will find the time to peruse what has kept us busy in the Department during the most recent year. Let me know any thoughts or suggestions you may have.

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